

HAMNET BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY 4 July 2004

HAMNET is the Official Emergency Communications network of the South African Radio League and provides emergency communication to local, regional and national authorities, when requested to do so.

THIS BULLETIN WAS COMPILED AND PREPARED BY FRANCOIS BOTHA ZS6BUU.

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1. HAMNET BULLETINS AROUND THE COUNTRY

KZN Sunday morning at 07H00 on their local VHF repeaters with a relay on 7.070MHz. KZN also have a Wednesday evening call-up and meeting on their 2M repeater system.

National Bulletin at 17H00 local on 145,700MHz, 10,130Mhz in the 30M band with a relay on 7.070Mhz in the 40M band. Current winter time is 16H30.

The Gauteng North bulletin will follow immediately after the National Bulletin on 145,725MHz in the Pretoria area on Sundays.

North West Province have a club bulletin on Mondays, which includes a Hamnet segment at 19H00 local on 3,750Mhz in the 80M band as well as their local repeater on 145.737.5Mhz.

Hamnet Western Cape Province meet on Wednesdays at 20H30 local on 145:700MHz, relayed on 3,674MHz.

The HAMNET Bulletin is sent to all those of whom I have an e-mail address and also sent out on packet by Rudi, ZS6DX.

2. EMERGENCIES AROUND THE WORLD

During the month of June, the globe experienced 6 natural disasters, and in July we have already had 2 namely mudslides in Nicaragua and yet another earthquake in Turkey.

June kicked off with floods in China, followed by a severe storm in the upper river division of the Gambia.

The mudslides in Nicaragua, of which there were more than 60, were caused by torrential rain and flooded rivers that killed 19 people. Thirteen are still missing and about 60 communities were affected by damage to property.

A month or two ago I mentioned rumblings from a volcano in Indonesia called Mt. Awu. This resulted in the evacuation of thousands of people living around the mountain area that had to be sheltered in various government buildings in

towns and cities, far away enough from the volcano, to prevent loss of life. This alert has now been lifted and people are returning to their homes.

There was flooding in Macedonia, Bangladesh, and in India. The latter two being caused by annual monsoon rains.

The humanitarian tragedy playing itself out in the Sudan, continues with the President of the United Nations (Kofe Annan) planning a visit to this region to see for himself what is going on. As mentioned earlier, people are being denied food and medicine and being starved to death because of their religious beliefs.

Turkey is criss-crossed by various faults and yet another quake measuring 5 on the Richter scale, hit the eastern province of Turkey, close to the Iranian border at 1:30am on Friday the 2nd of July.

The Red Cross was activated to assist thousand of families displaced by collapsed dwellings and to render first aid to the injured.

There are at least 27 other emergencies around the world at present, starting in alphabetical order in Afghanistan and ending in West Africa. Again, 14 of those emergencies are in Africa.

3. FURTHER SHIPPING INFORMATION

A Bulletin or two ago, we discussed the word “Mayday” and where it came from. Whilst updating the Hamnet Manual, the same article mentioned the words “pan, pan”.

It is interesting that this is another term used during a shipping emergency. The word is derived from the French word “panne” meaning breakdown and it is an apt term as it does not imply an emergency condition, but one which none the less requires rectification. In Morse, the “XXX” signal used for breakdown is not likely to be confused with anything else.

The words “pan pan” came up during a discussion with Alistair Campbell, ZS5MU who runs the Maritime Mobile Net. The Hamnet Manual is being updated to incorporate some shipping terms and frequencies as well as some emergency telephone numbers should we come across a shipping emergency.

Going by data and updates received from Andrew Perrins, ZR1SBN, there are many cases of late of yachts sending out distress signals that needed to be followed up.

On that point, ore is being moved out of the “Cape Africa”, which is till in False Bay, so that repairs can be done to her hull before she continues her journey to the Far East.

4. THE VALUE OF WEATHER RADIOS IN AMERICA

We all know how prone the United States of America is to all types and kinds of adverse weather conditions. It is nothing uncommon for a state or county to experience as many as 17 twisters in a single day.

The introduction of weather radios has increased the awareness of adverse weather conditions, floods, storms and also man-made emergencies such as chemical spills, breakdowns in the 911 system and missing children.

The Department of Homeland Security will also use the radio network to notify the public of terrorist attacks and a change in the colour-coded national threat level.

Alerts, when necessary, can be broadcast across regions or nationally. As an example, a problem at a nuclear power plant that could spread radiation over a long distance could prompt an alert to several states.

This new network is the result of an agreement with NOAA National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Dept. of Homeland Affairs.

This new network will now automatically be part of the national response to alerting the public to any pending or current dangers locally or across the nation. Fifteen to 20% of Americans own a weather radio but at present ownership is higher in the tornado prone areas. These radios sell from \$35 to \$70 depending on the type or brand of radio purchased.

5. CONTRIBUTORS

My thanks to a few HAMNET members who have contributed articles, Manuals and other information for not only my perusal but possibly items we can look at to improve our readiness should we be called upon to assist in an emergency.

Andy, ZS6CEY, Glen, ZS5GD, Tubby, ZS5TUB, Martin, ZS6MSG

OBITUARY

To many, the name Marlon Brando is synonymous with the movies. However, many did not know or were aware that Marlon was also a very keen Amateur Radio enthusiast. In his later life, which he spent on his own Island, situated 50Km north of Tahiti, he enjoyed the hobby until he took ill and as we heard, passed away this week. He was wheelchair bound for the last 2 years of his life due to pneumonia in 2002.

KE6PZH and/or FO5GJ became a silent key on July the 2nd. Mr. Brando will be remembered for many classic movies like, "A streetcar name Desire". "Mutiny on the Bounty", The Godfather, "On the Waterfront" for which he received an Oscar, the notorious "Last Tango in Paris", to name but a few.

That s all for today.

Bulletin ends.